1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

Geidam in the north, where another anthropologist, Abraham Rosman, and his wife were working. Discussions with Dr. and Mrs. Rosman helped all of us to see many of the unique features of Kanuri life that stemmed from our particular towns as against more general Kanuri patterns of behavior that were widespread throughout the society. We also became acutely aware of the kinds of variations that could occur across communities as they varied in size, ethnic composition, and quality of the political leadership. At the end of the first field trip, my wife and I spent three months in the capital city of Maiduguri looking at government reports and district notebooks, and acquainting ourselves with many of the special activities that characterize courtly life at the center of the emirate.

In 1964 and again in 1965 I returned to Bornu. On my previous visit the country had been a colonial holding of Great Britain, now it was part of the independent nation of Nigeria. My task in this second visit was to gather statistics on marriage and on divorce rates. But it also gave me a chance to see old friends, and catch up on what had been happening locally since my last visit seven years earlier. Some changes were readily apparent. A large number of deep wells were sunk all over the province, and these now provide enough water for a greatly expanded livestock population. Everywhere the cattle are healthier, fatter, and above all much more in evidence. They block roads and are seen herded in large numbers to and fro wherever one wanders over the countryside. Furthermore the people are less afflicted by parasites because the deep water is uncontaminated, as much of it was not during my first visit. There is now a large modern abattoir and a ground-nut oil refinery in the capital city, and in late 1964 the Nigerian railway finally pushed through to Maiduguri to connect the Bornu capital with Nigeria's national railway system. On the other hand, detailed questions about various traditional practices indicated that there have been few changes at the cultural and social level. At the political level where there were English District Officers and other officials of the regional government, now these posts are filled by Nigerians, generally from other parts of northern Nigeria. However it is for the most part correct to use the present tense in describing Bornu, and when this is not true I will attempt to mention the special circumstances that have brought on the changes.

Magumeri, our home for seventeen months in 1956 and 1957, sits on top of one of the ridges of Bornu, and there is a steep climb onto it from the motor road that travels along the bottom of the ridge for most of the year. During the rains, the road runs along the sandy top of the ridge, to keep clear of the large muddy areas formed at the ridge bottom. Magumeri includes approximately 2000 people about half of whom live in surrounding hamlets within the boundaries of the village area. It is a district capital and thus has a two-room primary school, a court house, and the large compound of the district head who administers twenty-one village areas, containing 50,000 people, living in an area of approximately 850 square miles. The village has a weekly market on Sunday, and is divided up into a number of wards under the village area head who is also the political leader of its surrounding hamlets and officially the political subordinate of the district head. Except for the fact that it has a somewhat lower proportion of non-Kanuri compared to most others, Magumeri is a "typical" Bornu village in terms of its size, occupational ranges of the population, and influences it receives from the capital and the world beyond the emirate. Indeed this is why I chose to spend most of my time

178 added feature that large sums of money must be distributed when
565 a man receives a title. Thus changes in the meaning and value
554 of noble titles have accompanied the changing position of the
431 aristocracy in the social structure of Kanuri society.

5. Material Changes.

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494 A number of material changes have been introduced which have also had important ramifications. The first of these is the communications system. Nowadays trucks go everywhere, carrying people and produce, tying remote towns to the cities, fostering trade, and allowing a much greater amount of individual mobility than existed in former times. Often the trucks pioneered the roads, beating down the bush in order to reach a village and carry out the peanuts, and thereby creating a
[653] road which would later be maintained as such. The roads are maintained by the Provincial Public Works Department, under a
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312 Provincial Engineer. The Public Works Department is also in
[653] charge of rural water supply which is responsible for the digging of new wells. Since the productivity of the region is a
[361] function of available water, the digging of new wells has led to the founding of new villages in sparsely populated areas. A secure and good year-round water supply is necessary for a thriving village. In addition, Fulani herdsmen, always an asset to
[563] [651] the local economy and a good source for local taxation, will be
178 attracted to new watering places for their cattle. Trucks, roads, and wells have had important effects on the way of life

243 ber is expected to last them for an entire year, and the months
221 of April, May and June are generally the hungry months, when the millet supplies begin to diminish.

244 Additional crops of some importance are varieties of beans,
243 okra, rice, melons, squash, tomatoes, cucumbers and onions.
312 These are frequently grown as garden crops, near places where there is a permanent water supply. They can then be watered by hand, or through the use of shadoofs to raise water from rivers to the higher banks.

244 Groundnuts are the primary cash crop of Northern Nigeria, and the Kanuri plant large quantities. Almost all Kanuri families, even those in the larger towns plant a crop of millet; in the villages, almost all plant a second crop of groundnuts
[442 as well. These are bought by agents of the larger trading com-
E134] panies for cash, and eventually are sold to the Nigerian Groundnut Marketing Board through which they are released onto the
433 world market. Millet is the basic subsistence crop of the Ka-
B34] nuri, while groundnuts are the primary source of cash for the Kanuri villager.

433 The Kanuri do not rely exclusively on agriculture. They
233 keep sheep and goats in their villages, which young boys take out beyond the fields to graze in the mornings, returning in the evening. Cows are kept, and fed by the same means, but
433 these are few in numbers. Certain Kanuri sub-groups, the Kwoyam
233 and the Buduwai, depend largely on cattle which they keep in
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511 The tools and household fixtures needed, include things like pots for water and cooking, calabashes and enamel ware dishes (often bought by the women from their own income, and made part of their own private property), leather water buckets and rope, hoes, axes, knives, spears and craft tools (if any are needed), mats, trunks, locks, and halters for horses and livestock. These are things which almost all Kanuri families own, and which depreciate, necessitating periodic expenditures for their replacement. Naturally, in larger households which use more water, sleep more people and produce more income, the [312] expenditures for tools and fixtures increases. Wealthy urban houses [354] have wells dug within the compound walls, making water easily accessible, while in Maiduguri, better class homes now have electric lights as part of the home fixtures.

372 In the rural areas, fuel is old millet stalks or wood, gath-
511 ered in the bush or bought from woodcutters. In upper class homes where women are often secluded and grain is purchased, then lack of millet stalks and female labour require that fires be fed from purchased wood. [354] All houses in Bornu, except those few having electricity, need kerosene, sold by the bottle, or the filling for lamps.

49 Transportation is necessary for visiting, going to market, or moving permanently to a new town or city. Modes of transport include foot, donkey, horse, camel, motor lorry, and all are commonly used. However, today the lorry is the most generally utilised form of transport for any long distance travel, while horse, donkey, camel and foot [484] are still used extensively for shorter moves in the locality. Camel caravans still ply northward from Maiduguri to attend markets at Geidam and Nguru, one hundred and fifty and two hundred miles to the north-west. [492] At the local rural level, donkeys and horses are the most common means of transportation besides walking.